14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

IV.

HOW I FARED AT COURT.

645 505 (552) At length, on August 27, Fatafehi's schooner the Malokula was declared ready for sea, and I embarked with Tukuaho, Fatafehi, and Chief Clerk Mataka. The vessel was unpleasantly crowded with old women, whose prostrate bodies made the traverse of the deck at night impossible. At sunset we passed Malinoa, where lay the four men who were shot after the attempt on Mr Baker's life. Thence, clear of reefs, we stood on with a fair wind through the night until we could see the glare of the volcano of Tofua, then in eruption. After a fruitless attempt to capture a pig at Haafeva, which wasted a precious hour, we dropped anchor at Lifuka at nearly 133 noon. We were on the lee side of a low narrow island, nowhere more than thirty feet above high-water mark, but covered with grass and cocoa-nuts to the water's edge. Other islands of the same kind stretched away to the 361 north and south of us. The town was a mere row of iron-347 roofed stores on the beach: behind them could be seen 351 the usual native huts dotted about among the trees, with grass growing right up to the doors, and horses tethered here and there between them.

15: Thomson G-3 (1886-1900) 1902
OU9 Tonga OU9

that they would not be satisfied with a Protectorate, but would ask for annexation. I flattered myself that I knew the little people too well to believe the latter forecast.

As the white line of houses that marked the capital grew in definition, I began to notice changes. There stood the palace and its church as trim as ever within the stone-walled compound, but to the westward, where a native could be seen running up the British ensign, a wooden bungalow had replaced the picturesque old native-built consulate. These had been prosperous years with the Tongans; there was not a native-built house to be seen; trim little weather-board cottages had sprung up everywhere, and in the vacant space beside the government offices of my day there now stood a pretentious wooden building, the new House of Parliament. Naturally the traders, who had had the erecting of all these, had prospered too, and the line of stores on the eastern side of the town were resplendent in new paint. Two houses only in all the half-mile—ruinous, rain-washed, and neglected—told their own tale. They belonged to old Tungi and his son Tukuaho, my dear lamented colleague; with them and with their owners the years had dealt unkindly, as I shall presently relate.